

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 10 have been drafted to overcome the objections under 35 USC §112 and §101.

Claim 11 has been drafted as a process claim. Support for this amendment is to be found at page 2 lines 25-35.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bortolussi et al. (BR9001035) in view of Shibanai et al. (US4677177).

Applicants respectfully disagree.

The aim of the invention is to provide polymer-based stopper which allow the continuous release of volatile corrosion inhibitor into the item the stopper is intended to obstruct.

The present inventors have found that in order to reach this aim, the volatile corrosion inhibitor used for the manufacture of the stopper is prevented from evaporating or decomposing during the manufacture proceeding by incorporating it in a structuring agent consisting of a solid or pasty substance having a low melting point of between 40 and 110°C.

Bortolussi et al. never disclose nor suggest incorporating the volatile corrosion in a pasty or solid substance having a low melting point of between 40 and 110°C to prevent the evaporation of the volatile corrosion inhibitor.

It is only mentioned in Bortolussi, as underlined by the Examiner, that the "primary" formulation may be processed at

temperatures as low as 80°C (page 12, lines 3-8). However, the compositions according to Bortolussi always contain together with the volatile corrosion inhibitor a contact corrosion inhibitor, as it comes from the specification, in particular the examples.

It is thanks to the combination of those two types of corrosion inhibitors, with other additives, that Bortolussi et al. manage to prepare satisfactory films for protecting metallic components against corrosion.

Shibanai et al. describes the formation of a clathrate between cyclodextrin and a volatile corrosion inhibitor, said clathrate being then incorporated into a thermoplastic resin and shaped by conventional methods.

The person skilled in the art is not incited to combine Bortolussi et al. and Shibanai et al. and even if he combined those two documents he would never obtain the stopper according to the invention because in the one hand, Shibanai et al teaches against the use of "free" volatile corrosion inhibitor, since it teaches that the volatile corrosion inhibitor must be introduced into a clathrate, and in the other hand, Bortolussi et al. teaches against the use of a volatile corrosion inhibitor as unique corrosion inhibitor.

Claim 1 is thus inventive over Bortolussi et al. in view of Shibanai et al.

Since claims 2 to 11 depend on claim 1, they are also inventive.

Applicant has taken good note of the provisional double patenting objection raised by the Examiner in connection with co-pending patent application No. 10/031472. As remarked by the Examiner, as far as no claims are currently allowed, this objection should be addressed upon allowance of the conflicting claims.

In view of the above and the amended claims, favorable consideration and prompt allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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